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MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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A Last Word To The Provident

We regard it as a matter of such moment to the ministers of our fellowship that once again we raise the question: **Have you made provision to be covered by Social Security?**

In most cases, you have been warned by state conferences and officials, and recently, Dr. Frank J. Scribner, General Secretary of the Pension Boards of the Congregational Christian Churches, counseled us in ADVANCE that time is running out!

In fact, by the time you receive this publication, it will be about the last word of warning you can receive and still have opportunity to obtain Social Security coverage. As the law is presently constituted, clergymen of whatever age must apply before April 15, 1957, or forever hold their peace.

Some men have resisted entering the Social Security program on the grounds: 1) that it involves the state in the personal lives of the clergy; 2) that they are already covered for retirement by the pension funds of our denomination.

For us, it is difficult to see any significant distinction between paying Social Security premiums and paying taxes. Further, it is apparent that ministerial pensions are something short of adequate.

No doubt, the Social Security program will, before many years, materially expand its benefits. If, however, you do not enter the program now, *you will be forever deprived of these or any benefits.* That is the law.

Three things a clergyman who desires Social Security coverage must do:

1. Obtain a Social Security number card from a Social Security district office, unless he already has one;

2. File with Internal Revenue a completed waiver certificate (Form 2031);

3. File Schedule C with his report of earnings and pay the Social Security tax to the Director of Internal Revenue when he files his annual tax return.

All this must be done by *April 15, 1957!*

If you need the forms mentioned above or further details, our advice is: Don't walk, run to the nearest Social Security office!

W. C. H.

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Comment

—from our readers

On "Theological Foundations in the Union"

I read with much interest the first section of "Theological Foundations in the Coming Union."

I was a bit amazed.

What amazes me is, first, the assumption that ecumenicity is the mind of Christ. The sheer dogmatism which is recognized in the fourth paragraph is intensified by the fact that it is a narrow dogmatism which limits the mind of Christ to a particular interpretation of ecumenicity, namely, some kind of one church, organizationally, I take it.

Second, I was amazed that anyone should feel there was "no precise theological difference" between the various branches of our Protestant tradition. In Lent of 1956 we asked representatives of varying strands of the common fabric of our church universal (invisible) to speak on "The Heart of the Gospel"; it was apparent that there were many and deep differences. Is there no theological difference between the Episcopalian and the Quaker?

And "Midstream Protestantism" — is there a common history and a common theological heritage? Are Luther, Zwingli, Knox, Calvin and Socinus alike? Historically, they themselves did not feel that they were alike.

I was further amazed at the definition of freedom as it is put forward on Page 27 wherein it is "freedom to adhere to one of the confessions which your fellowship accepts — the Heidelberg Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, or Luther's Catechism." This a rather limited freedom! It certainly is not what our Congregational forefathers meant by freedom from creeds imposed from without.

I was amazed by the continuing emphasis upon Daniel Jenkins. Those in the United States who favor certain trends in modern theology and polity love to quote Mr. Jenkins as if he were an oracle from Britain. In Britain he is not held to be any such thing by our Congregationalists. On the contrary he occupies no significant position among them, and is regarded by them as an interesting variant with a stimulating pen.

Now having gotten this off my chest, let me go on to say that I think the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY has shown a new birth since its present editorial group has taken hold of it. It's got some life and I think there is promise of real, ongoing value.

HENRY DAVID GRAY
Hartford, Conn.

On "Covenants"

Thank you very much for your invitation in the recent MINISTER'S QUARTERLY to discuss the matter of the Covenant. Your article struck a warm response in me because I have gone through much the same process of thinking that you have indicated . . .

Since coming to Sioux City, our Church has gone through a similar re-thinking of its Covenant. Just as your article indicated, we had had one in the past, which was very long and theologically involved. Because it was so long, apparently it fell into disuse. When I arrived and asked where the Covenant was, the deacons were abashed. They didn't know about it. So the process of education has gone on here, and with a pardonable reflection on my own influence, our Board of Deacons and our Church Council are recommending to the congregation a Covenant to be included in their by-laws, and to be used at appropriate times in the future . . .

(*Continued on page 39*)

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THE MINISTER AND THE PARISH

Dept. Editor:
CHARLES L. COPENHAVER, Glen Ridge Congregational Church, Glen Ridge, N. J.

The following refreshing discourse on a familiar subject was presented some months ago to a meeting of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference by one of our parish ministers. In the next issue of the QUARTERLY, *we shall reveal the other side of the coin in* IF I WERE A MINISTER *by a distinguished layman.*

IF I WERE A LAYMAN

by OTIS A. MAXFIELD

THIS TITLE IS one which leads easily into a common temptation: namely to presume that we have the knowledge to tell another how to do his job. Recognizing the presence of this desire in myself I would like to use my time at this laymen's meeting describing a few basic attitudes which to my way of thinking are needed by laymen of our century.

If I were a layman I would want to be a Protestant in the historic sense of the term. The term "Protestant" demands some definition. It carries two meanings. It stems from the Latin "Protestor," which in turn derives from "pro" meaning on behalf of, and "testor" meaning witness to. Thus a Protestant is a bearer of witness on behalf of something. This usage dates back into the early centuries of Catholicism. The second meaning is also ancient. A protestor connotes an open and avowed dissent from some declaration or action.

The first meaning which is positive in affirmation undoubtedly conveys the basic sense of the word. The second meaning which is negative always implies or connotes that which is unacceptable and opposed. According to the first, any Roman Catholic or non-Roman Catholic could be a Protestant; in the second meaning of the term a Protestant specifically is one who proclaims disagreement with certain Roman Catholic declarations.

If I were a layman I would want to remember that my Protestant roots went back to the early Christian community where the central task of every person was to witness to the truth of Jesus Christ. This is a far more glorious concept of a Protestant than the one prevailing in many circles which never gets beyond the protest of the Reformation period.

Further, if I were a layman I would want to remember that there is no hard and fast distinction between clergy and laity. We believe that historically in the Apostolic Church there was no distinction between those who preached, those who taught, or those who did other chores. Job distinctions were primarily for convenience, and every man had the authority that came through being a follower of Jesus. The concept of the priest-

hood of all believers, (regarded as a basic belief of Congregational Christians) had its origins in this Apostolic community where people were set apart for certain jobs just as we train people today to be policemen, physicians, lawyers and teachers. All, however, were considered as disciples and their authority was derived from their own religious experience and not bestowed by some external act.

In our day there are so many stereotypes about the distinction between preacher and layman, that most of them have become the butt of jokes. Not long ago while attending a conference in another city, the following experience took place. A good friend of another denominational affiliation was a member of a committee to which I also belonged. While all of us love and respect him dearly, we could not help but chide him about his persistent wearing of the clerical garb. This particular evening we had been in a long session and when it finally broke up we went out for a bite to eat. On the way upstairs in the hotel, we heard music from the ballroom and were informed that a political party was sponsoring a masquerade ball. We stood in the doorway and watched the people dancing, and all of a sudden from nowhere there appeared a very pretty young girl dressed in a Mickey Mouse costume. She put her hand on my friend's arm and squealed with delight saying, "That's the most original costume I have seen all evening!" Without another word she waltzed him off down the hall. We agreed later on that the distinction between clergy and laity was rapidly disappearing.

In the more serious vein, I am told that behind the pulpit from which John Wesley preached, in St. Sepulchre's Church, London, you can see high up on the north wall the mark of a door, through which the priest came from the monastery to read the Bible to the people. He then would go to join the other clergy behind the screen which ran right across the church. The clergy were all on the one side of the screen and the laity on the other. In some churches in different parts of the world you may still see the screen in this position. It exists only when there is a division between the secular and the sacred. In St. Sepulchre's Church now the only screen is behind the back pew, where it is useful to keep out the draft and the sounds of the street . . . it is behind the last member to enter. This doesn't mean the whole gathering has become secular; it means that the whole community have become priests. So each one of us is a priest if we are a disciple, meaning a follower of Jesus.

THERE ARE AT least two implications which this definition of priest has for each one of us. The first thing it suggests is that no man has a right to think of his task as secular and unrelated to religion. You recall the story of the juggler who joined the monastic order and in desperation finally did his juggling tricks before the high altar and how he received not criticism but praise from God, because he had done what he could and dedicated it to the Lord. In my scrapbook there is a note of an epitaph written on a tombstone in a village churchyard that goes like this: "In memory of Thomas Cobb, who mended shoes to the glory of God in this village for forty years." It is a wonderful thing to believe that every task, no matter how menial or how significant, is related to one's religious belief. The day is soon approaching when we shall perhaps ordain carpenters who are workmen who need not be ashamed of what they do; a day in which we shall perhaps ordain teachers, to manifest integrity when they are being supervised and also to call church worship "divine service," but as Leslie Weatherhead reminds us, divine service begins with our work on Monday morning.

The other implication of this idea

that there is no hard and fast distinction between clergy and laity is that the work of the ministry is the work of all the people. Unfortunately the typical Protestant layman is one who runs dinners, raises a budget, takes care of social affairs, but who feels bewildered, lost and sometimes insulted when called upon to pray, to make pastoral visitations, to show spiritual concern for another member of the fellowship. At First Church in Springfield, where I have the privilege of serving, more than one hundred lay people will be making pastoral calls this month. Today many of them will be delivering flowers to the shut-ins, calling on the sick, listening to those who are lonely and counseling with those in need. Such laymen see the total task of the church as part of their responsibility. While, to be sure, there are differences in their job function and mine, they are for convenience only and are never hard and fast.

If I were a layman my allegiance would be to the main stream of Christianity rather than to a specific denomination. Obviously there are many vehicles on which the message of Christ is carried. The denominations within Protestantism are nothing more than vehicles of transportation; in our mind the Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox branches of Christianity constitutes modes of transportation. Essentially however, the organization of each contains nothing sacred; its existence is justified only on the basis of the message it carries, not on any value attached to the structure itself.

With St. Paul, we need constant reminders that we do not belong to him, or Appollos or Cephas, but that we belong to Christ. Denominations and divisions within Christianity have sprung up in an endeavor to give proper emphasis to one aspect of our faith. A whole faith therefore demands inclusion of all branches of Christianity.

As with those we love, a denomination should be prized for its eternal qualities rather than for the specific forms of expression which it takes. In the union between churches of the Congregational Christian connection and those of the Evangelical and Reformed Church people from both groups have been quick to sense this fact. Thoughtful folk in each fellowship have acknowledged that our major loyalty is to the lordship of Christ and secondarily to the specific vehicle on which it is carried to us. If I were a layman I would want to be part of the group dedicated to the building of bridges within the various Christian communions.

Finally, if I were a layman I would hope that some day we might go beyond Protestantism. Thinking people of the Christian tradition today really care little whether one is a Lutheran or Reformed or Presbyterian. The label means less and less for the simple reason that something else means more and more. "Beyond" refers to something more significant than merely being a Protestant; it is being a Christian in a much larger sense than envisaged by those of the 16th century.

Not long ago I participated in the ministerial exchange conducted by those Congregational and Evangelical and Reformed churches. On a Saturday evening in Hellertown, Pennsylvania, we sat in a room late in the evening and joined with the hostess in devotions—our differences melted because we cared more and more about something more powerful—the experience of knowing the crucified and risen Lord. That Sunday morning I spoke between services to an Adult Bible Class in that Evangelical and Reformed Church. A woman of seventy-nine years of age, a life-time leader and member of that church introduced me. Before leaving we clasped hands and she said: "All my life I've labored to let others see the Christ. How strange and wonderful that in our coming together we shall have a more perfect revelation of His life for us."

A psychologist writes on our counseling role.

THE PASTORAL COUNSELOR

by FRANK AULD, JR.

THE FAMOUS HUNGARIAN psychoanalyst, Sandor Ferenczi, once wrote: "In dealing with the patient the physician is the representative of the whole of human society. Like a Roman Catholic priest, he has the power to loose or bind; through him the patient learns to render inoperative the former 'conscience' which made him ill; and it is by virtue of his authority that the patient is enabled to overcome his repressions." If a great deal of the effectiveness of the psychotherapist flows from the fact that he represents human society, how fortunate the pastor is that his role confers on him the right and duty to represent the moral standards of the community to his parishioner. The pastor can take advantage of his authoritative role, for the benefit of those who come to him for counsel, provided that he understands why the client responds as he does and what kind of counter-response by the pastor can be helpful.

In representing human society and the divine presence as well, the pastor stands as one in a series of authorities whom the client has reacted to. The first and most important of the previous authorities whom the client has known are, of course, his parents. The parents were the earliest representatives of society to the individual; they transmitted the culture to him. They showed him how to get along, how to achieve satisfactions, but they also indoctrinated him in the restrictions demanded by his culture.

The infant comes into the world knowing nothing about how to get satisfactions or how to obey the rules. He must learn these things, and *how* he learns them shapes his character. For, as psychoanalysis has taught us, emotional development involves the taming and directing of the primary, biologically-based drives. These drives include at least the following: pain, heat, cold, fatique, hunger, thirst, defecation, urination, sex. Nobody who has, or has had, young children needs to be told that these biological needs are urgent and that the parents face a difficult task in teaching the child to respond to these needs in ways of which the culture approves. The young child learns, gradually, to eat when and where and what the culture would have him eat, as a condition of satisfying his hunger. The parents carry out the child's cleanliness training, thereby channeling his drives for defecation and urination. The parents and other representatives of the society teach the child to bear some frustrations, to put up with some annoyances, to suppress a part of the aggression that he might otherwise express toward other persons. Most psychologists do not believe that aggression is a biological drive. It is, however, a readily learned response to frustration; it is as powerful and insistent a motive as some of the primary drives; and so it has to be channeled, just as the primary drives have to be. Indeed, it is absolutely vital that aggression be controlled, at least to some degree; without some control organized social life would be impossible.

Not the least important thing the parents teach the child is that he must inhibit and channel his sexual drive. The way in which parents do this differs somewhat among various human societies, just as the manner of eating varies from culture to culture. In some societies the control over sexual activities is more strict than in others. But in every human society, there is some control over sexual activities. There is no society, for instance, which permits intercourse between parent and child or between siblings. The incest taboo is society's way of driving the child out of the family for his sexual satisfaction. Evidently making the child seek

sexual goals outside the family serves to preserve the integrity of the nuclear family, by preventing the development of intense sexual rivalries within the family. The insistence on exogamous marriage also brings about a marriage tie which binds together the families of husband and wife. In most societies, the incest prohibition is extended to other persons besides one's own children and siblings; who, exactly, falls under the ban varies from society to society.

In tracing the emotional development of the child we have seen that the child is faced with a series of learning tasks as he is successively required to master the various biological drives, to find ways to satisfy them in his society. We have seen an interaction between primary drive, urgently seeking satisfaction, and the environment, which determines the conditions under which the drive can be satisfied. It is by exercising his adaptive capacities that the child learns to gain satisfaction of his drives in the most economical way possible under the circumstances.

However, part of these circumstances is in no way inevitable but depends on the practices of the society into which the individual has been born. For instance, it is biologically and physically possible for the child to eat with his fingers, but in our society his parents won't let the child do it. The same is true of every other primary drive. Thus the child is required to learn and to abide by the moral code of his society. At first, he learns because his parents are around to enforce the code. Gradually, however, the code becomes a part of the child; as psychologists say, it becomes internalized.

Psychoanalysts speak of the primary drives as the Id, of the individual's adaptive capacities and activities as the Ego, and of the individual's conscience as the Superego.

It is the child, with imperious biological drives, which he has learned to satisfy through exercise of his adaptive capacities, which he has learned, more or less, to satisfy in accordance with his society's moral code—it is this child, grown up, whom the pastoral counselor counsels. The adult client, meeting the pastoral counselor for the first time, reacts with approximately the same feelings that he has learned to react with toward his parents. And so he must, for his parents were the earliest representatives of society, the persons who first showed him what people are like and the persons who brought him through the early learning experiences that I have described. Automatically, the adult *generalizes* to the pastor the reactions originally learned toward the parents, and especially those learned toward the father, who in patriarchal societies is generally a more authoritarian person. Among these generalized responses is the expectation that the pastor will punish as the parents punished, will reward as they rewarded, will adhere to the same moral standards; and that he will be equally loving or equally hostile, equally dominant or permissive, equally rigid or equally tolerant. If the parents have been trustworthy, the client will expect the pastor to be so. If the parents have been deceitful or hypocritical, the client will expect such behavior in the pastor.

A very important part of what a pastor does in helping his client is to act differently from the client's parents, thereby enabling the client to change his behavior. The importance of the counselor's acting differently becomes apparent as one surveys the ways in which a pastoral counselor can have an effect on those who come to him for help. He helps them in five ways:

1. *The pastor gives support.* Sometimes he even gives material aid; more often, he gives sympathy, friendship, comfort. Giving support is frequently appropriate. Indeed, the pastor (or any counselor) should probably give some support, whatever else he also does. However, when

the client is struggling with an emotional conflict, support alone is not enough. Further measures, such as permissiveness and clarification, then become essential.

2. *The pastor gives information or advice.* Sometimes information is what the client needs. A high-school boy, who has never thought of going to college, decides he'd like to get a college education. The pastor tells him about various colleges and what they have to offer; advises him how to apply for scholarship aid; tells the boy what courses he must be sure to take in high school in order to get into the kind of college the boy wants to attend. Such information-giving shades off into advice. It is well to remember Freud's comment: "One can give advice about the unimportant things, but not about the important ones." When a client's indecision is connected to an unresolved emotional conflict, advice won't help; only clarification can.

3. *The pastor gives permission* for freer, more expressive behavior—and especially for greater freedom of thought. Sometimes the pastor is permissive because the client's conscience is much too strict. The client may feel guilty not only about outrageous aggressions, but also about reasonable self-assertion. To the degree that the pastor can help to soften the client's harsh conscience, he can help the client live a more satisfying and more constructive life. Sometimes the pastor must bring adult standards to bear, where the client is still reacting with a conscience appropriate only to the childish circumstances in which it was acquired. The child, for instance, learns that sex is forbidden; as an adult, however, the individual needs to be sexually expressive, to find joy in his love relationship with his mate. Indeed, strong sexual rewards ideally serve as a powerful cement to a marriage. The client whom the pastor can help to get such strong rewards will be fervently grateful to the pastor.

4. *At times the pastor must firmly represent the demands of reality* upon the client. A married woman who takes the risk of having an affair, and who feels guilty about it, may have to be told that the social reality is this: If she gets caught in her infidelity, she will be severely punished. No counselor can change this social fact. However, having said this, the counselor ought to go on to inquire why this woman needed to be unfaithful. It should puzzle the counselor that she could not get sexual satisfaction in her marriage. Real help for this client would require clarification of these emotional problems; condemnation of her current course of action will not avail.

5. *The pastoral counselor clarifies* the client's problem or, better stated, helps the client to arrive at clarification. To do so, the pastor must understand the dynamics of emotional life. Unfortunately, in most seminaries nothing is taught about emotional life. Pastors who are able to help clients to clarify emotional problems are those who have a happy gift of intuition, who do the right thing by feel. There are, of course, few pastors who possess such exceptional talent. With appropriate instruction, however, the graduates of our theological seminaries could learn the laws of emotional life, so as to be able to act, guided by principles, as effectively as the few talented now act, guided by intuition.

May I close with some comments about some views which the psychotherapist and the pastoral counselor share. The psychotherapist believes that the effects of the past can be undone, that the individual can hopefully take up a new way of life. He does not condone mistakes and misdeeds, but he forgives them. He does not excuse flaws, but asks the patient to reform. He leaves the patient the freedom to choose his own path and does not try to impose his will on the patient; one might express this somewhat differently by saying that he respects the integrity of the patient as a separate, autonomous individual. I believe that the good pastoral counselor has essentially the same attitude.

A plea for church architecture which reflects faith.

"THAT THE ETERNAL MAY BE KNOWN—TODAY"

by LAWRENCE W. FAIRCHILD

THOSE OF YOU who have seen the motion picture CINERAMA HOLIDAY will recall that the young Swiss couple, who toured the United States, added several extra days to their New England visit. They were especially impressed with the scenery of New Hampshire, which they felt was unmatched anywhere else in the world.

We, who know New England intimately, are grateful for this compliment, largely because it agrees with our own feeling on the matter. Of course, New England means many things to many people. But, one of its universally attractive features is the small, rural village, dating back through many generations. You know the picture I have in mind: a main street, lined with stately elms or majestic maples; deep, expansive lawns; well-kept flower gardens; and imposing, two-story houses, built by master-craftsmen.

Such a setting invariably arouses a nostalgia for many of us because it suggests a way of life which stands in sharp contrast to our modern urban existence, which so often is hurried and harried.

However, there is another feature about these New England towns which is suggestive for our thinking this morning. It is the white, clapboard church facing the village green, and dominating the entire community, especially with its tall, graceful spire directing men's thoughts, as well as their eyes, toward heaven.

Each of these old-time New England meeting-houses stands as a striking symbol of the intense convictions and loyalties of our colonial fathers. They say to those of us who will listen:

> "Remember! In our day the Christian Church was not only at the center of town, but also at the heart of life! Look at us. We can tell you much about the times in which we were built, and about the men and women by whom we were built."

Actually, Colonial churches are not the only ones which can make this claim. All churches of all the ages speak in much the same way. It has been said that church architecture is the handwriting of the human race, and the pictorial record of man's spiritual search. Sartell Prentice, in his book, THE HERITAGE OF THE CATHEDRAL, has suggested, "If all the Medieval manuscripts had perished, we would still be able to trace the main outlines of European history in the architecture of her churches."

This is true because church architecture reflects the hopes, the fears, the beliefs, the doubts, the dreams, the prayers of the men and women who create it, and of the worshippers who use it.

Every great civilization in history—Egyptian, Assyrian, Classical, Greek, Roman, Medieval, Mayan, Renaissance, Colonial American and many others—revealed their culture through the temples and the churches which they erected. This has always been so. It is still so in our present day.

Here in the United States, for example, we are building more new churches, and re-modeling more old churches than ever before in our history. Some persons interpret this as conclusive proof of a renewed interest in religion, and of a surging revival in spiritual matters.

Perhaps so! Perhaps not!

Just take a look at much of the church building which is taking place all around us. Generally, a great deal of it involves

the imitation and the copying of styles and forms which were created by our early American ancestors. There is a frank dependence upon Colonial and Georgian architecture when it comes to the building of a new church in our day.

Now, if it is true that church architecture reflects the minds and the lives of its builders, then it seems to me that we may make this observation:

> Our present tendency to imitate the architecture of our forefathers suggests that we may be a spiritually decadent generation. We may be without a vital, dynamic, religious experience which we can call our own!

We imitate the architecture of our forefathers, because we are hungry for the spiritual certainties and convictions which they knew. We yearn—many, many of us—for that "Faith of our fathers, holy faith" which "kept our country brave and free." We'd like to experience the trust, the confidence, the assurance which our fathers knew. And so—we try to build churches which will look like their churches, in the hope that thereby we may recapture the spiritual experiences which those churches expressed.

But, it cannot be done. You cannot satisfy the spiritual yearnings of your mind and heart merely by borrowing the symbols of a previous generation. You cannot fulfill the spiritual needs of your life simply by repeating the external evidences of another generation's prayers and worship.

Something has gone wrong in our thinking at this point. We are like children who pretend that they are adults by wearing mother's high-heel shoes, or father's felt hat. Not only are these articles misfits, but they fail to fulfill the purpose for which they are borrowed. They do not transform children into adults.

So it is, also, with our masquerading in the spiritual togs of our Colonial ancestors. They do not fit us. Neither do they automatically provide us with the spiritual satisfaction for which we yearn. The reason for this is that each generation, even as each individual, must seek and express its own faith in its own terms.

We have the wisdom of Jesus Christ, himself, on this matter. You remember his parable about placing new wine in old wineskins. Apparently he was referring to the new thought and spirit which he offered to men, as contrasted with the traditional teachings and practices of ancient Judaism. He warned that it is unwise to confine the new faith in old forms, for it is a fresh and growing thing. It must always be given its own expression. Here is a requirement which rests on every age.

To be sure, Christianity does not change its content. The love, the truth, the constant presence, the healing power of God is unchanging and eternal. But always, with each generation, as with each individual, it must be re-experienced, and then expressed anew, as though it had never been proclaimed before.

Our Colonial forefathers were well aware of this fact. The meeting-houses and churches which they built were of their own creation. Their intense convictions were given new expression in the church architecture of their day. As an example, they turned away from the traditional Gothic, because it savored too much of "popery." So, they developed their own expression of Christian Faith. They placed the pulpit as the focal point of their worship. They removed all ornamentation and built plain, simple houses of worship, free from pretentiousness and display.

Later, as their Puritanical fanaticism declined, and as their wealth increased, they gradually replaced the simplicity of the meeting-house with the more elaborate churches of the Georgian magnificence. But, let us ever remember that our spiritual ancestors constantly sought to

express their own personal beliefs and convictions rather than to copy the expression of someone else's religious faith.

This has been true of the whole history of the Christian Church, at its best. One striking example is seen in the life of Abbot Suger, whose progressive genius led to the early experiments in the 12th century with the pointed arch that made Gothic architecture possible. (We think of Gothic as having existed from the beginning of time, but, actually, its development was the result of considerable struggle.)

LEGEND HAS IT that the Abbot Suger went walking one day in the garden, where he came upon one of the monks, the Brother Tomas, who was well versed in theology and quite interested in the work of the new church. He said, "Father, I would bring to your mind the young and radical architect who is vaulting our aisled choir. He builds his architecture, not in the good established and conventional Roman manner . . . but in a most strange and irregular form. Let him be reproved for what he does lest he further profane (the church of our Lord). His modernistic approach is destroying the traditional Church of Christianity."

To this, the good abbot replied, "You are saying that the Christian Church has reached an architectural perfection. This is not accepted as true by all of us who are working on these experiments in the new church . . . Architecture has always been dynamic, always been changing, always been meeting new problems in order to achieve significance . . . New forms, new ideas, new people are ever foreign to us until we develop the imagination and the understanding to see them in their proper relationships and their true perspective."

Now, up to this point, I have suggested that church architecture reflects the mind of its builders, and the spirit of its age. I have suggested that our present-day copying of church styles from another generation indicates a lack of spiritual health in our own lives, and that we have a responsibility—to ourselves, to our day, to our God—to create and develop a church architecture which will speak of things Eternal, not in terms of a previous age, but in terms of our own modern living.

Let me go on to suggest that this challenge confronts each and every one of us. If we are to build a church that will express the reality and permanence of the Christian Faith—in terms that are meaningful to our 20th century civilization—then ALL of us must have a part in the creation of it. This is not a task for only a few persons. It is a responsibility and an opportunity in which each and all of us should share.

Bear in mind that the great Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages in Europe were built by the men and the women who worshipped in them. ALL the people had a part in the creation or the building of these cathedrals.

So it was, also, with the early Colonial churches here in America. The Colonists personally designed and then constructed their own meeting-houses. They contributed their time, their intelligence, their funds, because for them the church was not the product of a few men's minds, but the expression of EVERYONE'S convictions and prayers and aspirations.

Thus it must be in our own day. The task is not for a committee, nor even for a group of committees. The task belongs to all of us. If we are to build a church that will express the hopes, the yearnings, the struggles, the spiritual ambitions of our lives in this 20th century, then every single one of us should participate in the prayers and the conversations and the planning conferences which are a necessary first step.

And, we must begin by re-examining the ministries and the objectives of our

church in these modern times.

Recently, the American Institute of Planners held its national convention in the city of Providence. I sat in on their work-shop, which dealt with the planning of churches in this present day. I had expected that the reports and the discussions would deal with construction methods and with architectural styles. But, the first third of their morning seminar was devoted entirely to a consideration of the *objectives* of the Christian Church in human society.

This is precisely where all of us must always begin, if we are to plan and then to build a church which will effectively minister in our day. Let us examine and re-examine, let us evaluate and re-evaluate the aims, the goals, the purposes of our church as we understand them in our times.

Then, when we know our reason-for-being (in terms that are vital to our present daily lives), and when we know the objectives toward which we are moving (again, in our own lives and in the lives of those who will come after us), then—and only then—will we be qualified to plan and to build a church which will minister effectively and significantly in our generation.

SOMETIME AGO, A church in Indiana commissioned an architect to prepare plans for a new church. The congregation wrote the architect a letter, portions of which were as follows:

> "First of all we must have a new building because our present one is too small and its equipment inadequate . . . However, we shall be very much disappointed if our new church turns out to be no more than a building which will house large numbers and accommodate a variety of activities . . .
>
> "We are asking you to build a church which will interpret the Spirit of Christ and of the Gospel, and which will also promote these ideals and assure their perpetuation among us. You may ask why we do not spend the same money in Christian work and arrange to worship in less impressive surroundings. Why is a monumental building desirable to the practice of Christianity, the humblest of faiths?
>
> "A costly church can be justified, in our opinion, only so far as it inspires and stimulates people in living better lives. We are willing to pay for a church which is designed to achieve this end; but we are not willing to pay for luxury and display . . . However, all of us are inclined to lose sight of our goal unless it is constantly before us in the Communion Service, sermon, music, and Church School. To be effective all of these must be impressive in the deepest sense of the word.
>
> "We believe that a church building can be created which will surround us and our descendents in a Christian consciousness which will be hard to lose . . .
>
> "Great buildings dominate and influence the lives of all who live near them. A church which embodies and illustrates the truths of Christianity should be a monument in which the affection and aspiration of many generations of Christians are centered. That is why we choose to spend our money in this way. We want our labor, in the form of this building, to continue to influence the lives of our children, and of theirs, to remind those who pass of Christ, and to renew His Spirit among us.
>
> "So now you see why we want our new church, and what sort of a church we want you to build."

In this attitude, and with this approach, let us, also, plan and then build.

A consideration of the bases of church membership.

TOWARD A STRONGER MEMBERSHIP

by ROYAL F. SHEPARD, JR.

ONE OF THE AREAS in the life of our churches which seems most in need of constructive investigation is that of the whole concept of the bases of church membership. Congregationalism was born in part out of a concern for this very matter. It is appropriate today, when our attitudes regarding the meaning of church membership seem to be in a state of confusion, that we take up this concern once again.

The question of the bases of church membership may be conveniently divided into two parts: 1) the requirements that ought to be met by those seeking membership, and 2) the discipline of those who are already members. I am concerned here with the first part, that which concerns the qualifications expected of new members.

The problem of what should be expected of prospective members raises issues as old as Christian history. Over the years a debate has waxed and waned between two schools of thought. On the one hand, there are those who stress the inclusiveness of the church's ministry. On the other hand, there are those who insist on the purity of the church's character.

Those who stress the inclusive ministry may point with some justification to the ministry of Jesus himself. He aimed at saving the lost sheep. Consequently he consorted with notorious sinners. Therefore, it is argued that the church should not close her doors to anyone. She should receive in all who sincerely seek to find within the Christian family some redeeming contact with their Creator, however weakly they may proceed. As one of my deacons remarked regarding a certain family of questionable repute, "Well, they're better off in the church than out of the church." Those who hold to the position of the inclusive ministry are usually realists who wish to avoid the assumption of a "holier-than-thou" attitude by those sinners already on the membership roll.

Taking an opposite point of view are those who maintain that in the long run the church would be better off if some conditions were laid down for admission to her membership. They seek the highest possible degree of spiritual efficiency within the church, and they intend that the church should maintain a pure witness before the world.

It cannot be denied that in the beginning Congregationalism leaned rather heavily on this latter side of the debate, the side of purity. The first Congregationalists, particularly those of the separatist sort, protested against the impurity of the English church with its inclusive parish system . . . They sought to found churches composed of men and women who on their own initiative bound themselves together by means of a sacred covenant, who could testify to an inward experience of conversion, and whose outward lives gave evidence of Christian character. In fact, it is one of the ironies of Congregational history that our practice in recent years has put us on the other side of the fence from those churches stemming from the tradition of parish-wide membership. While the latter continue to give careful attention to the instruction of prospective communicants, we tend to receive members having little educational preparation and quite often even less spiritual conviction.

So far as the historic debate is con-

cerned, I suspect the practical truth lies somewhere in the middle. Yet, since in recent years Congregationalists, like many other Protestant groups, have veered over to the more lenient extreme, it would pay us now to emphasize once more the requirements for membership. Today, however, the central question should not be, "whom shall we keep out?" but rather, "how shall we prepare those who earnestly desire to come in?"

The classic statement of the Cambridge Platform is still relevant in answering this question.

> The matter of a visible church are Saints by calling. By Saints, we understand. Such, as have not only attained the knowledge of the principles of Religion, & are free from gross & open scandals, but also do together with the profession of their faith & Repentence, walk in blameless obedience to the word, so as that in charitable discretion they may be accounted Saints by calling . . .[1]

The first part of this statement indicates that one of the requirements for membership should be *educational*. Members should "have attained the knowledge of the principles of religion." Let us try to make this antique phrase relevant to present needs.

Primarily the educational qualification means that prospective members should have a basic understanding of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith and life. This need not mean a rigid, doctrinaire understanding. Rather it should mean an understanding that grows out of the sort of free and responsible inquiry that is so dear to Congregational people. Yet, more than this, such persons should also possess a basic knowledge of the mission and work of the church with which they seek to unite. They should understand the rationale of its worship, the method of its organization, the rights and duties of its members, and the activities of the denomination with which it is affiliated. A firm grounding in all these matters is essential to good churchmanship.

If prospective members are to acquire such knowledge they will need instruction from the pastor or someone else competent to undertake the ask. The manner and length of the instruction must needs be adapted to particular circumstances, but it should not be neglected.

The young people's membership, or confirmation class, plays an important role in this connection. The main weakness that occurs in connection with such classes is that often they are too brief, too automatic and too localized. The time needed for this enterprise will depend partly on the effectiveness of the church school, but I have come to the conclusion that this job cannot be adequately done in less than a year. By "too automatic" I mean the tendency for young people to drift into such classes as a matter of course when they have arrived at the required age. They should be given an opportunity to decide for themselves both about taking part in the class and uniting with the church.

In Nebraska we have sought to overcome the class's tendency to be too localized by the inauguration of an annual Convocation On Churchmanship. Here young, prospective members from around the conference gather to learn something of the wider work of the Christian Fellowship and to derive inspiration toward good churchmanship in their local congregations.

The educational task, however, cannot be confined to the children growing up in our midst. Prospective adult members need instruction too. That is particularly true today when so many adults who lack former church experience are now seeking closer ties with the churches. No adult should be admitted to membership by confession of faith without adequate educational preparation. Unfortunately

1. *The Cambridge Platform of 1648*, New York, The General Council of Congregational Christian Churches, chapter iii, page 11.

our fellowship lacks suitable printed material to assist with such preparation. "The Manual For Church Members" published by the Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life is good, but it is not sufficiently comprehensive. There is an opportunity for creative work in this field.

Next, the Cambridge Platform points to qualifications of character and devotion. "Not only knowledge," but something more is required; namely, faith, repentence and obedience to the word. I leave out the word "blameless." That, I think, is asking too much.

What then should we expect of prospective members in regard to faith and character? The following requirements would seem to constitute a minimum essential:

1. Basic religious conviction that is Christ-centered.
2. Readiness to own the covenant, not as a bit of ceremonial red-tape, but as a solemn and inviolable pledge.
3. The sincere promise to attend worship regularly, to provide that material support of which they are capable, to participate in the business and program of the church, and to assume such positions of responsibility as they may creditably perform.
4. Evidence of a firm resolve to conduct themselves in a manner becoming disciples of Jesus Christ.

In applying all of these requirements we should exercise "charitable discretion." We cannot expect "saints" in the modern sense of the word. But we should expect the sincere dedication of persons carefully informed of the mission of the Church.

There are many factors in our communities that militate against the application of such requirements to new members. Some of them are unavoidable, but many are ignoble and ought to be resisted. Among these latter are the competition for members between churches of different denominations, the desire of the minister to increase his prestige by enlarging the roll, the concern of the laymen to ease their financial burden by spreading it thinner. These temptations beset us. Yet, in the long run a vital church, true to its mission, requires a dedicated and informed membership. That is true above all in a Congregational church, where the exercise of freedom must go hand in hand with the practice of responsible churchmanship.

The First Mark of a Successful Pastor

One of the most hopeful developments in the church life of today is the new emphasis upon pastoral work. Gone is the minister who wandered over the country making speeches during the week, turning up on Sunday to preach before he went on to the next place. Going is the species of divine who considers it beneath his dignity to push a doorbell—unless he has been invited to dinner. Ability to share in the lives of his people is the first mark of a successful pastor.

—JOHN R. SCOTFORD

Confidence is the Minister's forte.

THE POWER OF THE EXPECTANT SPIRIT

by GRAHAM R. HODGES

WEBSTER'S COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY defines "expect": "To look for with some confidence." This is the minister's forte: To look with a great deal of confidence to a change in individual souls, to the strengthening of the local and universal church, and to the improvement of society by Christian standards.

What held the Jews together during long exiles, what inspired their great prophetic writings? Was it not their *expectation* that their God would bring them home again? He would redeem them, reward their faithfulness, and punish their tormentors. Their expectation gave them a spiritual unity which ran like a common thread through Jewish communities all over the world.

After Jesus' death the early Christians had a ready expectation that he would return very soon. Any moment, any day, he would come back. They expected him momentarily, as a hostess expects an honored guest. Everybody should be ready. There was a power in their expectant spirit which has never been excelled in Christian preaching. That they were disappointed does not lessen the effect of the post-Pentacost sermons. Well, actually, Jesus has returned. Most people simply don't care to meet him or acknowledge his presence. It was Christ's own feeling of expectation or anticipation that his disciples would recover from their cowardice and betrayal and become like rocks which bolstered these young men. His faith, openly expressed to them, transformed timid young outlanders to stalwart national figures. He expected them to succeed, to be faithful. They couldn't let him down.

Nothing weakens a sermon more than the inner feeling of the minister that it's a chore to be performed, gotten over with, delivered. Nothing is expected to happen and nothing will.

Old-time elocutionists used to tell their pupils (for volume effect): Speak to the back window. Plenty of sermons *are* aimed at the back window or at something else than people. The expectant speaker or preacher aims directly at human targets and expects, with the Spirit's help, to hit the mark. No just shooting arrow's into the air, as Longfellow did.

In non-preaching situations, too, the minister needs an expectant spirit. If he expects the worst of people he will never be disappointed. But his job is to expect the best and work for the best. Plenty of gloom peddlers going around the town mumbling "you can't change human nature." Not to debate the point, but that's exactly the church's mission. Jesus changed Peter from a coward to a brave man. Of course, if we don't expect people to change, they won't.

In distributing church responsibility among laymen, the pastor needs the expectant spirit. Let's face it: Most jobs in any local church can be done just as well by lay persons as by ordained ministers. If sufficient training is done, if responsibility is definitely defined and assigned, and if the pastor, as head of the church, shows a spirit of positive expectation, then laymen will respond surprisingly well and effectively.

The expectant spirit allows for the Holy Spirit's working all about us. The minister does not work alone who feels a hovering, protecting, assisting force working alongside him, day and night.

Not alone by eloquence, intellectual might, or publicity, saith the Lord, but by my spirit.

When I was in college I did some high jumping. I discovered what every high jumper knows. When the bar is set at a reasonable height, whether or not you clear it depends largely on whether you think you can or not. If you know you can't then you can't. If you approach the bar with confidence then you're good as over.

The expectant spirit affects the pastor. And it radiates from him, like a highly contagious thing, affecting whatever human souls he contacts. Like attracts like, love draws out love, faith inspires faith.

Let's expect God's work to succeed, because it will, you know.

THE LITANY OF THE APATHETIC

Minister: Our Church has stood on the same spot for over 200 years.
Congregation: Isn't that nice.

Minister: I preach sermons that the people like and never disturb anybody.
Congregation: We enjoy your sermons so much.

Minister: Our Ladies Aid has more money in the bank than any other ladies aid in the association.
Congregation: Isn't that nice.

Minister: We don't believe the church should mix in politics, social issues, or economics.
Congregation: It is so nice to have a churchy church.

Minister: Our Sunday School teaches the Bible from cover to cover.
Congregation: Little children are so sweet.

Minister: We believe charity begins at home.
Congregation: And ends there.

Minister: We don't like anyone to tell us how much we should give to missions.
Congregation: God helps those who help themselves.

Minister: We believe theology just mixes people up.
Congregation: It is so nice to have our religion make us feel good.

Minister: Our deacons are the oldest men in the parish.
Congregation: It is so nice to have such spiritual looking men.

Minister: Our Board of Trustees never wastes any money on new fangled ideas.
Congregation: Isn't that nice.

Minister: Our people are sound New England stock.
Congregation: We are thankful we are not as other people are.

Minister: Our Church is free to do as it pleases in all matters.
Congregation: Nobody can tell us what to do.

Minister: Our church had to close because nobody was as good as we are to continue it.
Congregation: Isn't it a shame!

BEN BRADFORD AND FRANK M. WEISKEL

A Collect For Compassion

THERE IN THE rudest tree
Where winter grips and rocks
The black indefinite cold,
Comes the small Chickadee,

And like my soul, pipes
Anxious prayer, implores
An opening of doors,
Some crust and surety.

My hand, give him his bread!

May whirlwind God pause
From His storms and come
To me with Cup and Crumb.

—ARNOLD KENSETH

THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY

Dept. Editor: LAWRENCE L. DURGIN, Central Congregational Church, Providence 6, R.I.

In this issue we are finishing the publication of Charles Arnold's article on the "Theological Foundations in the Coming Union" by presenting the section "Concerning the Church." After some time in the parish ministry, Mr. Arnold is presently completing his work as a candidate for the M. A. Degree at the Chicago University Divinity School. While we may have a full-dress article from Henry David Gray in the next issue, in the meantime, we direct your attention to Dr. Gray's comment on page 3 of this issue.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS IN THE COMING UNION
Part II

by CHARLES H. ARNOLD

B. *Concerning the Church:*

HERE IS THE "pou sto" of our whole discussion: the doctrine of the Church. Are we agreed on this? I see almost complete unanimity on this; indeed, so great a unanimity that the union is a "fait accompli." But I do not mean to be bland and nonchalant believing that it can come about without much difficult work and strenuous thinking and fervent prayer. There will be (and definitely is) opposition, especially from a small, but vociferous group among us. Perhaps there will be some opposition or at least inertia on your side. Doubtless some will say to us as an ancient king said to a prophet of Yahweh: "Ho, thou that troublest Israel!" And even so *we* cannot unite the Church anyway: it must come by the will of God's Holy Spirit, who is the "Lord and giver of life," who sanctifies and makes the Church whole.

Let us look closely at the decisive documents that embody this hope of union among us.

(1) The controlling document is "The Basis of Union with the Interpretations." What is its ecclesiology? It (we) recognizes the one "holy Catholic Church" which is greater than "any single Church" and than "all the Churches together." (Preamble). Denominationalism is not championed at all; they (i.e., the denominations) are recognized as means to ends ("as parts of that Church"). We are willing to see their demise ("and if need be die . . . ."). The hope is set forth that this union of two bodies (formerly four) will be another step in a more inclusive union between this Church and other bodies. Further, in Article II: The Church Catholic is noted as "the innumerable company of those who, in every age and nation, are united by the Holy Spirit to God in Christ, are one body in Christ and have communion with Him and with one another." Summarily this means: The Church is ecumenical, historically continuing, spiritual, corporate, and in faith, trinitarian. It is congregational, evangelical, and reformed, i.e., it stands under the perpetual need of critical cleansing and healing by the Word of God.

The Church is on pilgrimage in the world: it must bear witness to the world of the "saving grace of God in Christ." It can never be, and must never be, a society of the spiritually "elite" (who might once have been the "elect"!) who sit in congregations and "manicure their

souls" (the phrase is James Hastings Nichols'). It must do battle for justice and peace in the world. It lives "between the ages"; our hope is in Christ who is Lord of the Church and of history. We look forward eagerly and expectantly for "the triumph of righteousness and for the life everlasting." This is the eschatological hope: it foretokens how *all* things are related finally to God, and how God redeems history and our part in it.

Its "élan vital," then, is the missionary urgency of proclaiming this hope that is in Christ to the whole world, calling all men "to repentance and faith." When the Church (and the Churches) fails in this task, then it is no longer the Church of Christ and judgment has begun in the household of God.

When the Word of God is proclaimed faithfully (not perfectly, or eloquently, or even in human wisdom), and people hear this Word and accept Him, this Word gathers men and women into *congregations* (not "crowds"). The congregation is the *gathered* people of Christ. When they have been gathered and fed on the Word and have received the good bread and wine of the sacrament of the Body of Christ, then with the benediction they are *dispersed* to bear their witness to the saving deed in the home, in the school, in the office and market; to the lost, the last and the least; to the neighbor in need, to the brother who offends, and even to the enemy.[11]

This is the obligation of the whole church, this witness-bearing; tragically, it has been committed exclusively to the "clergy." Happily, the ecumenical movement is exploring this idea of the Christian vocation of the people of God, and it portends the real hope for the renewal of the Church in this age.

The "Basis of Union" states that "the basic organization of the United Church of Christ is the congregation; that is, the local Church (III.A). I would add: the *focal* Church, for it is here that the Church Catholic has its *beachhead* for its assault on the forces of anti-Christ.

Congregationalism has long proclaimed this as its distinctive witness—but too much emphasis has been placed on the word "local," which often leaves me with the idea of its being stationary, conventional, mediocre, and ingrown. Surely for a long generation (which is still with us) it has implied "isolationism" and "individualism."

ENTER NOW THE hallowed phrase: "congregational autonomy." For those who have so vigorously upheld this phase, it has been used as synonymous with the essence of Congregationalism. I differ with this, and agree with Prof. Elmer Arndt, that when this is made the condition of union, the question of the nature of the Church is raised in an acute fashion[11]. It simply makes polity the "esse" of the Church. Polity or Church order is then made constitutive of the Church; when actually the constitutive reality is the Word of God. I will even go so far as to say that it is a distortion of the nature of early Congregationalism,[12] which when true to its ethos was non-Separatist (i.e., it did not conceive of itself as being *exclusively* the Church). Those who stake their claim on "congregational autonomy" make polity sacrosanct. In another place I have referred to those who hold to polity or order so rigorously and make it almost determinative of the faith as the "fundamentalists of the cultus".[13] In this respect I characterized especially the "Anglo-Catholics" who make the "apostolic succession" the one cardinal condition of Christian Union. Frankly, the low Church Congregationalist can be guilty of this same rigid mentality and just as idolatrous in his espousal of this thing that he believes to be the sine qua non of all Christian unity.

You will see that I am speaking particularly of the group among us usually labelled (and libelled) the "anti-merger." I respect their right to speak, publish,

and be heard in every way open to them. They have some able and devoted Churchmen in their rank; what is said here is not a caricature, or said without due study of their spoken and printed words. I am only seeking to characterize their position as it finds its expression in their attempt to defeat the union. I maintain that they are "fundamentalists of the cultus." And more: that they have abstracted and idolized a particular polity, or their understanding of it, almost to the exclusion of all else. They have been free to refer to you as "authoritarians." Hear this from Harold Bailey, Secretary of the "League to Uphold Congregational Principles," in their *Newsletter,* October 1954:

"Is it possible to have an *organic merger* of free Churches, such as Congregational Churches, with an authoritarian denomination, such as the Evangelical and Reformed Church, without either the E. and R. Churches becoming free Churches or the Congregational Churches becoming authoritarian?" And in this same issue, Dr. Russell J. Clinchy says:

"Here in this order *alone* (the Congregational), is found the freedom of the individual Christian, and of the individual Church to state its faith, to interpret the Word of God, and to act with liberty of conscience. Such precepts become the foundations of Christian freedom. Congregationalism *is* different, and the difference is of great consequence."

When Dr. Clinchy uses the word "alone" *he* becomes an "authoritarian," for you have stated repeatedly that polity is not of the essence of the Church. Dr. Arndt says that polity is "functional"; Dr. Richards says that it is an "adiaphoron," a matter of preference; Dr. James Wagner concurs with this. Dr. Douglas Horton, our Minister of the General Council says the same; so does Daniel Jenkins and Prof. Daniel Day Williams. So would Truman Douglass and Walter Horton and Matthew Spinka. Shall I further call the roll?

I do not pretend to be an expert on Church polity, and perhaps there is something in it that I do not quite comprehend. But I do not see it as a life and death issue, either for the Church or for my own Christian existence. Theology and polity may be more closely related than I suspect. It is true, e.g., that in Anglicanism polity and theology are almost inseparable, for they believe sincerely that the apostolic succession-historic episcopate are *essential* to the whole nature of the Church. "Where the bishop is, there is the Church."

Early Presbyterianism thought likewise that polity was a vital part of the Church's life, especially as maintaining a *discipline* over the constituent members (e.g., in Geneva). Among early Congregationalists polity held a high place, as the many books and tracts with paragraph titles indicate. My reading of all of this would indicate that polity was thought of as a means to an end: that end being the good ordering of the Church vs. anarchy (John Owen's "gathered into Church order"). Obviously, we must have polity or Church order. Through the Christian centuries three types have grown up, viz.: presbyterial, episcopal, congregational. All find some rootage in the apostolic era, though not in pure type. All are good when they order the common life of Christians; all may become crystallized and congeal into rigid structures that block the effective presence of the Holy Spirit. All *have,* let us admit freely, stood in the way of Christian reunion in our day.

ACTUALLY I AGREE with Henry P. Van Dusen's proposal that in the time to come we must have a fusion of all three "orders" in a "principle of comprehension" (cf. *Christendom,* Summer, 1946, Article: "The Issues of Christian Unity").[15] The same would be true of baptism as immersion and sprinkling; of adult baptism and infant baptism.

Indeed, I think that Congregationalism needs more Church order, for we have been too often sectarian, if not in intention, at least in practice. (cf. Norman Goodall's position about the United Church of South India in *Congregationalism Plus.* Said he: it will take us beyond sectarianism.)

Congregationalism is really a fusion of the classical Reformed conception of the Church and the "sectarian" idea, for example, affinities with Anabaptism.[14] Consequently, it has had a problem from the beginning in relation to Churches of its own kind and those of other orders. It was soon obvious that congregations had to live with other congregations; associations were formed, and later councils, then national and general councils. And today, the World Council of Churches. At this stage I maintain that congregational autonomy is really an illusion, for we are subtly drawn into many *extra-congregational* relations and all our vaunted freedom is a determinate freedom. I know that Prof. Marion Bradshaw, late of Bangor Seminary, will say that I am "submerging Congregationalism."[15] But our Churches have their status (unless they withdraw and become really "independent"!) in associations; and our ministries are accredited by associations in relation to State Conferences. Doubtless, some will say: but it is all *voluntary* (and voluntarism is a wholesome doctrine.) What does "voluntary" mean in all of this?

WE MUST REMEMBER this: that while the local congregation is the basic *form* of the Church, it is not the *only form.* There can be associational and synodical congregations; Douglas Horton argues eloquently that the General Council is a "congregation of congregations" and its executive officer is the "Minister." Really in our country, especially, we need have no great fear that any of our freedom is going to be seriously checked. Bishop Berggrav observed recently as he traveled over this country that all of our Churches have "a congregational tendency"—even in the Catholic Churches! When we can discuss freely and openly theological and political matters I have no fear of my freedom being amended. And I am willing to forego some of it to see a larger unity of God's people in this generation. "Here I stand; I can do no other."

We have spoken much of our "freedom" as Congregationalists. What is "freedom"? Is it identical with laxity and license? Daniel Jenkins, referring back to a great worthy of ours, who is just now coming into ken as a first rate theologian, the late Peter Taylor Forsyth, says rightly that our freedom is a *founded* freedom. "It is a freedom which arises from the experience of God in Christ as the Scriptures declare Him and as the Spirit-guided Church throughout the ages has known Him."[16] Freedom is freedom in faith.[17] Says Jenkins: "This is the heart of Christianity and is not peculiar to Congregationalism."[18]

Likewise, "fellowship" is much in vogue among us. Fellowship is "koinonia", participation in the redemptive energy in the life of the whole Church. It is fellowship in faith and in the *founded* freedom of Christ's people everywhere.

(2) Finally, I have before me the unified witness of the ecumenical movement in its various documents. Especially, the Report of the American Theological Committee on Faith and Order—*The Nature of the Church* (1945) and Vol. I: "The Universal Church in God's Design" of the Amsterdam Volumes, *Man's Disorder and God's Design* (1948). I shall not attempt even a half-way sketch of these testimonies. I shall only point to a very basic convergence and unanimity that is now among us on the doctrine and understanding of the Church; suffering, militant in the Earth, and destined to come to unity in its Head and members, triumphing and reigning eternally.

Unquestionably, we must take cogni-

zance of this ecumenical witness, for it is actually the immediate background of our very attempt to unite as denominational bodies. As I read these documents again, I was amazed at the almost monotonous agreement, both in verbal form and sentiment: it may mean what Visser t' Hooft says: the Church is already "one"—we simply have to "recognize" that unity.

The late Dean Clarence T. Craig, in his "Report on the Study of the Church," summing up the agreement of the committee, said:

"All acknowledge one God as the Founder of the Church. They recognize a covenant between a God who is faithful and a people whose faithlessness is ever overcome by Him whose mercy endures forever. This Church has been brought together by the revealing, redeeming act of God in Christ, whose purpose has its consummation in a redeemed people."[19] Dr. Craig goes on to say that the "sociological view" found no support within the committee, as it might have a generation ago. However, in continuing ecumenical study, the "non-theological factors" have received constant scrutiny. But the agreement is, after long study, that the Church is a new, or rather a renewed, creation of God in His redeeming act in Jesus Christ.

It is obvious by now that this has come about by a fruitful return to the deeply Biblical foundations of the Church's life. And this has not been done by committing the fallacy of primitivism; i.e., jumping back across the centuries to a so-called "model" Church in Jerusalem, Antioch, or Rome. Rather, it has been the recognition of a primary fact, viz., that the Church is the ecclesia, the People of God elect in Christ; that it is a "congregation of believers in Christ in a local community." As such, it is that paradoxical body of people who are a "communion of saints" who know that they are sinners! Though they are weak and cannot command one soldier, they are nevertheless the "Church Militant" in the world. And more: not "many wise or noble" are among this people, yet they who were nothing are now something by God's gracious acceptance (I Cor. 1:18 ff; I Pet. 2:9).

In the Amsterdam volume, Gustav Aulén (Swedish Lutheran), Clarence Craig (Methodist), John Gregg (Anglican), George Florovsky (Eastern Orthodox) and Karl Barth (Swiss Reformed) discuss the doctrine of the Church. No one would expect these men to agree and no one could accuse them of just agreeing to be agreeable, to sort of forget their differences for the sake of good-will. Yet, they do agree in such basic things as the *nature, function* and *mission* of the Church. For example:

I. What "constitutes" the Church?
   (a) Aulén: "The Word of God and the Sacrament of Baptism and the Eucharist" (Vol. I, p. 22)
   (b) Barth: "The Church exists, where, and in so far as it dares to live by the act of its living Lord" (Vol. I, p. 67).
   (c) Florovsky: "The Church of Christ is one in the Eucharist for the Eucharist is Christ Himself" (Vol. I, p. 49).

II. What is the mission of the Church?
   (a) Florovsky: "The primary task of the Church is the proclamation of the Gospel" (Vol. I, p. 55).
   (b) Craig: "The preaching of the Gospel is the supreme function" (Vol. I, p. 38).
   (c) Gregg: "The Church is in the world to speak with authority concerning the revealed Truth" (Vol. I, page 62).

There are many other parallels which we need not cite here. These will indicate that these men, who are Churchmen and theologians, are all true to the Biblical witness, though they may phrase their concern differently from each other and though they may be looking at the same reality from different ends.

What has brought this to pass? I believe that it is the result of a return to Biblical theology. Biblical "realism" has produced an ecclesiological "realism." Dr. Oliver S. Tomkins in his preparatory study for Lund confirms this:

"The movement has had a profound effect on ecumenical conversation. It has afforded those from different traditions, with the consequent differences of vocabulary, with a common language and a common universe of discourse. It has led to the refurbishing of traditional Christian words, discoloured by currency in different atmospheres, words like *redemption, sacrifice, faith, grace,* etc. Above all, in this connection, it has led to a common rediscovery of the biblical idea of *the Church.*"[20]

The *Faith and Order Report* from Lund, 1952, says the same:

"It has given a new expression to the Biblical revelation in its greatness and transcendence. This biblical study cuts across denominational lines and often provides a fresh starting point for rethinking denominational relationships."[21]

Here we are then at the end of this discussion. I hope sincerely that we have seen together what God has done for His Church in creating it and recreating it by the power of His Word—the "Word that became flesh" and dwelled among us; that Word that abides in the Church as the presence of the Holy Spirit. I hope that we have seen the tokens of the possibilities that lie in the ecumenical movement, especially as it confronts us now in the union ahead of us. I believe it will be a union and even a re-union in a real sense. Let us acknowledge that God's Word in Christ is a present indicative, and that this present indicative is also a present imperative calling us to a union of "heart and mind." Let us recognize that it is the behest of that Holy Spirit "that searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God." (I Cor. 2:10).

FOOTNOTES

11. Douglas Horton says that *"the final cause,* or purpose, of a congregation is to hear and declare the Word of God." *Congregationalism: A Study in Church Polity,* p. 82.
12. *The Messenger,* September 1, 1954, "Congregation and Denomination."
13. cf. Douglas Horton, op. cit., Chapter III.
14. Article, *Religion in Life,* Summer 1954: "Biblical Authority in Contemporary Protestantism."
15. Truman B. Douglass says that some form of "episcopacy" should be provided for in any plan proposing to unite the major Protestant bodies, especially in this country ("Corporate Union—Why Anything Less?" *Christendom,* Spring, 1948); Dr. Nathaniel Micklem, English Congregationalist, lately retired from Mansfield College, Oxford, once said that he could accept and live under a "modified episcopacy."
16. cf. Christendom, Summer, 1946, R. Bainton, "The Sectarian Theory of the Church."
17. cf. his *"Free Churches and Christian Unity,"* Ch. 2.
18. Jenkins, op. cit., p. 50.
19. The "Committee on Free Church Polity" in their *Study* submitted to the General Council last June, 1954, says this very thing: "This autonomy rests upon a specific binding religious experience—a seeking and a following of the guidance of the Holy Spirit by the people of this gathered Church." (p. 11.)
20. op. cit. p. 68.
21. Craig, *The Nature of the Church* (1945), p. 23.
22. Tomkins, *The Church in the Purpose of God* (1951), p. 43.
23. Faith and Order, Lund, 1952 (S.C.M.) pp. 47, 48.

"Only when God has drawn us closer—"

It is not we who can heal the wounds in His Body. We confer and deliberate, and that is right. But it is not by contrivance or adjustment that we can unite the Church of God. It is only by coming closer to Him that we come closer to one another. And we cannot by ourselves come closer to Him. . . . It is not by understanding one another, but by more fully understanding Him, that we are led towards our goal. . . . It is toward Him that our eyes must be directed. Our discussion of our differences is a necessary preliminary and no more. Only when God has *drawn* us closer to Himself shall we be truly united together; and then our task shall be not to consummate our endeavor but to register His achievement.

—William Temple

THE MINISTER AND WORSHIP

Dept. Editor: ARTHUR P. COLBOURN, Pawtucket Congregational Church, Pawtucket, R.I.

COVENANTS OF CONGREGATIONALISM (Part II)

Readers are invited to send in copies of their local church covenant to be printed in THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY. *Such a sharing can make a real contribution to our church life, reminding us of our abundant heritage, and encouraging some of our churches to take more advantage of the rich possibilities that are native to, and rooted in, our tradition.*

Please send only covenants that are suitable for frequent congregational use, i.e. relatively short, phrased in poetic idiom and characterized by a timeless theological and literary merit.

THE CHARLESTOWN-BOSTON COVENANT, JULY 30, 1630

(*Text from A. B. Ellis' "History of the First Church in Boston" p. 3*)

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, & in Obedience to His holy will & Divine Ordinaunce.

Wee whose names are herevnder written, being by His most wise, & good Providence brought together into this part of America in the Bay of Massachusetts, & desirous to vnite our selves into one Congregation or Church, vnder the Lord Jesus Christ our Head, in such sort as becometh all those whom He hath Redeemed, & Sanctifyed to Himselfe, do hereby solemnly, and religiously (as in His most holy Proesence) Promisse, & bind ourselves, to walke in all our wayes according to the Rule of the Gospell, & in all sincere Conformity to his holy Ordinaunces, & in mutuall love, & respect each to other, so neere as God shall give vs grace.

THE CENTER CHURCH OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, 1632

(*This covenant is thought to be the one adopted by the Church on its organization in Newtown* (*now Cambridge*) *Mass., in 1632.*)

Since it hath pleased God, in His infinite mercy, to manifest Himself willing to take unworthy sinners near unto Himself, even into covenant relation to and interest in Him, to become a God to them and avouch them to be his people, and accordingly to command and encourage them to give up themselves and their children also unto Him.

We do therefore this day, in the presence of God, His holy angels, and this assembly, avouch the Lord Jehovah, the true and living God, even God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, to be our God and give up ourselves and ours also unto Him, to be his subjects and servants, promising through grace and strength in Christ (without whom we can do nothing,) to walk in professed subjection to Him as our only Lord and Lawgiver, yielding universal obedience to his blessed will, according to what discoveries He hath made or hereafter shall make, of the same to us; in special, that we will seek Him in all His holy ordinances according to the rules of the Gospel, submitting to His government in this particular Church, and walking together therein, with all brotherly love and mutual watchfulness, to the building up of one another in faith and love unto His praise: all which we promise to perform, the Lord helping us through His grace in Jesus Christ.

(*Continued on page 31*)

SERVICE FOR GOOD FRIDAY

by LORING D. CHASE

An Introductory Note

Seldom in the life of our churches is there opportunity for a sustained reading of Scripture. The best that we achieve is a weekly selection of passages taken from their context with the consequent loss of the climactic effect which the biblical writers intended.

No book of the Bible lends itself better to sustained reading than does the Gospel According to St. Mark, and no day in the church calendar lends itself better to such reading than does Good Friday, with its customary service during the three hours "when there was darkness over the land." Few ministers or batteries of ministers can measure up to the emotional demands of Good Friday with words of their own. The gospel can; hence the following service, which, with minor variations in music and in prayers, has been held annually in the Congregational Church of New Canaan, Connecticut for the past six years.

It is announced that worshippers may come for part or all of the service. Books and pamphlets are available for reading during the periods of silence, when people are advised to move about but asked to refrain from conversation.

Whatever the effect on the congregation, the sustained reading of the gospel, with all of its strangeness and beauty, cannot fail to have a tremendous impact upon the minister who conducts the service.

THE GOOD FRIDAY STORY IN THE GOSPELS

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE
Mark 14:32-42

THE BETRAYAL AND ARREST
Mark 14:43-52

THE TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES
Mark 14:53-72

THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

Matthew 27:1-14,	Jesus delivered to Pilate; Judas hangs himself.
Luke 23:4-16,	Pilate sends Jesus unto Herod; Herod sends Him back to Pilate; Pilate would release Him.
Matthew 27:15-31,	"Barabbas or Jesus?"; Pilate's wife's dream; Jesus delivered to be crucified.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

Luke 23:26-43,	Simon of Cyrene forced to bear the cross; Jesus addresses "the daughters of Jerusalem"; Jesus and the two malefactors.

FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Lk. 23:34)
SECOND WORD FROM THE CROSS—"Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (Lk. 23:43)
"AND IT WAS NOW ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR"
John 19:25-27, Jesus and the women standing by the cross.
THIRD WORD FROM THE CROSS—"Woman, behold thy son! . . . Behold thy mother!" (John 19:26-27)
"ABOUT THE NINTH HOUR"
Matthew 27:45-49
FOURTH WORD FROM THE CROSS—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46)
John 19:28-30a
FIFTH WORD FROM THE CROSS—"I thirst." (John 19:28)
SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS—"It is finished." (John 19:30)
Luke 23:46-48
SEVENTH WORD FROM THE CROSS—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (Lk. 23:46)
Mark 15:40-41 ". . . women beholding from afar."
John 19:31-37 ". . . one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side"

THE BURIAL OF JESUS
Mark 15:42-47

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP
(Noon - Three o'clock)

* * *

The Order is planned so the people who cannot stay for the entire time may come and go. There are alternate periods of organ music, scripture reading, prayers, and silence—during which people are urged to move about, and to read literature which is provided for them in the Church.

* * *

12:00 THE PRELUDE "I call to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ" J. S. Bach
"Hark! A voice saith, all are mortal" J. S. Bach

CALL TO WORSHIP:
Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

PRAYER: Almighty God, Father everlasting! who hast set us in the fellowship of Thy Son Jesus Christ, be near to us in these hours of solemn meditation. May our hearts be open to every holy affection, and ready to receive and cherish every sacred memory and serious impression. Give us to know the power of that death which this day commemorates. Let a portion of the spirit which led our Saviour to the Cross, descend upon us and fill our hearts with the love of God and man. Here and now may every selfish passion and desire be quiet, and may the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep our thoughts in Christ Jesus. Amen. (3)

FIRST READING: Mark 1:1 - 4:41
Almighty God, who through the ministry of thy Son and the prompting of thy Spirit dost ever summon us to conform our wills to thine: Grant that we may love the thing which thou hast commanded, and thus find the fulfillment of thy purpose for us in the purified desires of our own hearts. (5)

Grant, O God, that Christ may meet us while we are in the way; so that walking with him we may follow the paths of righteousness and never wander away into the darkness of this world's night, since he who is the truth and the life goes with us on our way. (5)

We give thee thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou hast manifested to us through Jesus thy Son. As this bread was scattered on the mountains and gathered into one, so let thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the world into thy Kingdom; for thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. (5)

Almighty God, who didst send thy Son into the world to heal our hurts of body, mind, and soul; We pray thee to bless the work of all hospitals (especially those now caring for men wounded in the service of their country). Give to all workers therein patience and skill, faithfully to fulfill their calling. We commend to thee all sufferers committed to their care: praying thee to still their pain, to relieve their anxiety, to companion their loneliness, and bid them cast their cares upon thee, since underneath are thine everlasting arms. (5)

Finally, vouchsafe to us who are unskilled in the arts of healing, that still our hearts may be tender and our hands gently wise. Save us from passing by on the other side of the widespread pain of the world, and summon us to our part in that fellowship of suffering wherein our Lord and Master was made in all things like unto his brethren. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen. (5)

May the peace of God rule in your hearts and the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

12:40 ORGAN MEDITATION "Jesus lover of my soul" Bingham

or

"I need thee every hour" Bingham

or

"Chorale Prelude on a Plainsong melody" Healey Willan

SECOND READING: Mark 5:1 - 9:1

Set before our minds, O heavenly Father, the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who when he was upon earth found joy in doing the will of him that sent him, and in finishing his work. When many are coming and going, and there is little quiet, give us grace to remember him who knew neither impatience of spirit nor confusion of work, but in the midst of all his labors kept a tranquil heart, at leisure from itself to serve and sympathize. (5)

O God, whose eternal Word made flesh not only showed our world the unthought-on steps which lead to heaven; but trod them out plain with his own sacred feet, and ordained others after him through all generations to guide ours steadily in them: Let not, we beseech thee, so much love and care be lost on us; but vouchsafe us thy continual necessary grace, that we may not only profess with our lips this precious way, but make it our whole life to walk diligently in it. Amen. (5)

O God, we ask thee not to lift us out of life, but to prove thy power within it; we ask not for tasks more suited to our strength, but for strength more suited to our tasks. Give us the vision that inspires, the strength that endures, and the grace of Jesus Christ, who wore our flesh as a monarch's robe and walked the ways of earth like a conqueror in triumph. (5)

O Almighty God, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are far off, and to them that are nigh: Grant that all the peoples of the world may feel after thee and find thee: and hasten, O Lord, the fulfillment of thy promise to pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh. (5)

Grant, O Lord, to thy servants and followers who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, that their conversation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; that they may stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel; that in nothing terrified by their adversaries they may be bold in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake, Who liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen. (2)

O Thou, whose eye is over all the children of men, and who hast called them, by the Prince of Peace, into a kingdom not of this world: Send forth his Spirit speedily into the dark places of our guilt and woe, and arm it with the piercing power of thy grace. May it reach the heart of every oppression, and make arrogancy dumb before thee. Let it still the noise of our strife and the tumult of the people. Commit thy word, O Lord, to the lips of faithful men, or to the free winds of thine invisible providence, that soon the knowledge of thee may cover the earth, as the waters cover the channels of the deep. And so let thy Kingdom come, through Christ thy Son. Amen. (5)

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

1:20 ORGAN MEDITATION "When on the cross the saviour hung" J. S. Bach

or

"All glory be to God on high" Edmundson

THIRD READING: Mark 9:2 - 11:11

Almighty God, who in the life and teaching of Thy Son hast showed unto us the true way of blessedness, Thou hast also showed us, in His sufferings and death, that the path of duty may lead to a cross, and the reward of faithfulness may be a crown of thorns. Give us grace to learn these harder lessons. May we take up our cross and follow Christ in the strength of patience and the constancy of faith; and may we have such fellowship with Him in his sorrow that we may know the secret of his strength and peace, and see, even in our darkest hour of trial and anguish, the shining of the eternal light. Amen. (3)

Almighty God, who knowest the weakness which we are slow to confess even to ourselves, take from us, we beseech thee, the faithless mind that would shrink from the way by which thou leadest, and draw back from the harder paths of a dutiful life. As disciples of the Man of Sorrows, may we steadfastly set our face to go to Jerusalem, prepared to meet all the counsels of thy will, and to be obedient even unto death, seeking only for strength to glorify the cross thou layest on us. Amen. (3)

O God, who by our great Master's dear example hast taught us what labors heaven deserves, and that we are to take it by force: Confound in us, we humbly beseech thee, that nice tenderness of nature, which is averse to the hardship we ought to endure as disciples and soldiers of Jesus Christ. (5)

Lord, we pray not for tranquillity, nor that our tribulations may cease; we pray for Thy Spirit and Thy Love, that Thou grant us strength and grace to overcome adversity; through Jesus Christ. Amen. (2)

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy Blessed Son, so, by continual mortifying of our corrupt affections, we may be buried with Him, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection. Amen. (6)

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1:55 ORGAN MEDITATION "O Welt, Ich muss dich lassen" Brahms

FOURTH READING: Mark 11:12 - 14:11

O God, who hast brought us to this holy time, wherein we renew the memory of our Redeemer's Passion, hear us, we beseech thee, and enable us to observe it in the spirit of holiness and piety, of humility and penitence, of love, and adoration and gratitude. Grant that His sufferings may show us the grievousness of sin, and the punishment due to it, while they give us comfort in showing to us the ground of our hope. That so, putting our whole trust in Him, Who is the Sacrifice and Ransom for our sin, we may enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, and dying unto the world, may live evermore with Him, our Saviour and Redeemer, even Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. Amen. (2)

Grant unto us, O heavenly Father, thy peace which passeth understanding, that we, amid the storms and troubles of this life, may rest in thee, knowing that all things are in thee, under thy care, governed by thy will, guarded by thy love; so that with a quiet heart we may face the storms of life, the cloud and the thick darkness; ever rejoicing to know that the darkness and the light are both alike to thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who did grievously suffer for our sakes and hast entered into thine eternal joy. Amen. (4)

O Father, most merciful, Who in the beginning didst create us, and by the Passion of Thine only begotten Son hast created us anew, work in us now, we beseech Thee, both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure. And forasmuch as we are weak, and can do no good thing of ourselves, grant us Thy grace and heavenly benediction, that in

whatsoever work we engage we may do all to Thy honour and glory; and that, being kept from sin and daily increasing in good works, so long as we live in the body we may ever show forth some service to Thee; and after our departure may receive pardon of all our sins, and attain eternal life; through Him Who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth forever and ever. Amen. (2)

O merciful God, who has made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all who know thee not, as thou art revealed in the gospel of thy Son. Take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy fold, that they may be made one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. (6)

May the Lord Jesus Christ fill us with spiritual joy, may His Spirit make us strong and tranquil in the truths of His promises. And may the blessing of the Lord come upon us abundantly. Amen.

2:30 ORGAN MEDITATION "O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sunder gross" J. S. Bach

or

"Lead us, O Father" S. Bingham

FIFTH READING: Mark 14:12 - 15:20

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified; mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the Cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

Almighty and Everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the Cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

ORGAN INTERLUDE: "Ach Herr, mieh armen Sunder" J. S. Bach

SIXTH READING: Mark 15:21 - 15:47

Holy and Ever-Blessed God, who dost ask abundant labours and sacrifices from those whose lives are enriched by much love, we thank Thee especially at this time for sending thy beloved Son to live and die for us and our salvation; and while we meditate on His final conflict and passion may we be filled with His Spirit, so that we may be enabled to offer up ourselves entirely, even as He did, to Thy holy and perfect will. Amen. (3)

Deepen in us now, O God, our sorrow that we have so often followed our Lord but afar off. Open our eyes to see him dying innocent for us who are so full of fault. Grant that, by his passion, we may be led to put away those sins which make us unworthy to be numbered among his disciples. By thy redeeming love and saving grace let the shadow of his cross fall upon our lives to make us, from this day forward, ever mindful of his great and saving love for us. Amen. (1)

ORGAN INTERLUDE "Christ lag in Todesbanden" J. S. Bach

SEVENTH READING: Mark 16:1 - to 8 or 19, depending on time.

O Lord God, Who didst send down Thine only Son to redeem the world by His obedience unto death; grant, we humbly beseech thee, that the continual memory of His bitter Cross and Passion may teach us so to crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof that, dying unto sin and living unto Thee, we may, in the union and merits of His Cross and Passion, die with Him, and rest with Him, and rise again with Him, and live with Him forever; to Whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen. (2)

O God, the Father of the Prince of Peace, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, and on the cross did pray for his murderers, implant in our hearts the virtues of gentleness and patience, that we may overcome evil with good, for his sake love our enemies, and as thy children seek his peace, and evermore rejoice in Thy Love. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen. (Source not found)

O Lord God, whose blessed Son did bear our sins in his own body on the tree: Give us, we pray thee, such true repentance and amendment of life, that we may never crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame, by conscious and willful sin; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

O God, whose blessed Son did suffer for all mankind: Grant unto us that, rightly observing this holy season, we may learn to know thee better, to love thee more, and to serve thee with a more perfect will; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

O God, who didst will that thy Son should suffer death upon the cross, that thou mightest deliver us from the snares of the enemy: Grant that by the merits of his death we may know the power of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

O God, whose blessed Son did overcome death for our salvation: mercifully grant that we, who have his glorious passion in remembrance, may take up our cross daily and follow him; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (6)

* * *

And now—MAY THE GOD OF PEACE, THAT BROUGHT AGAIN FROM THE DEAD OUR LORD JESUS, THAT GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP, MAKE YOU PERFECT IN EVERY GOOD WORK TO DO HIS WILL, WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELL-PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT: THROUGH JESUS CHRIST TO WHOM BE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

* * *

The prayers for this Good Friday Service were taken from the following anthologies:

1. *"A Book of Worship for Free Churches"* Oxford, N. Y., 1948
2. Fox, Selina *"A Chain of Prayer Across the Ages"* New American Edition—E. P. Dutton, N. Y., 1943
3. Hunter, John—*"Devotional Services for Public Worship"* Revised Edition 1903—E. P. Dutton, N. Y., 1936
4. *"The Pilgrim Hymnal"*—The Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1935
5. Sperry, Willard L.—*"Prayers for Private Devotions in War-Time"* Harper & Brothers, N. Y., 1943
6. Suter, J. W.—*"The Book of English Collects"* Harper & Brothers, N. Y., 1940

COVENANTS—(*Continued from page 25*)

OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, MARCH 12, 1669

We, whose names are underwritten, being called of God to join together into a Church in heart-sense of our unworthiness thereof, disability thereunto, and aptness to forsake the Lord, cast off his government and neglect our duty one to another; Do in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, trusting only in His grace and help, solemnly bind ourselves together as in the presence of God.

Constantly to walk together as a Church of Christ, according to all those holy rules of God's word, given to a church body rightly established, so far as we already know them, or they shall be hereafter farther made known to us.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

In the name of God, Amen. We, the members of this Church, humbly repenting of our sins, and trusting in His grace to save, guide, and strengthen us, hereby engage to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. We resolve to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God; to take the Lord Jesus Christ as our Master, His Spirit as our spirit, His way of life as ours. We promise to pray, to work, and, if need be, to suffer, for the establishment of His kingdom of righteousness, freedom and brotherhood among all men; to do our part in maintaining the services of this Church and in supporting its ministry at home and abroad; to promote its honor and peace; to submit to its discipline; and to be kindly affectioned one to another.

The Lord grant us grace to be true to this our covenant, and to glorify Him with the holiness which becometh His house forever.

FROM COMMUNICATION TO COMMUNION

by JOHN WEBSTER

"It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." John 6; 63.

WHEN LINES OF communication break down, life becomes difficult and ultimately impossible. Last summer I went searching for some large flat stones to be used in bridging over a fireplace. My guide, who knew the foothills of the Berkshires very well, led the way through miles of twisting, grown-up woods roads which in places seemed impassable. Time and again we had to get out and remove large stones from the middle of the road and cut away some brush. Ultimately we came to a dead-end road in the middle of nowhere surrounded by woods.

After looking around the area a bit more thoroughly we discovered there were old cellar holes and with the aid of a bit of imagination one could reconstruct in his mind the little settlement which once existed there. Here was the farmhouse, and over there the barn. Down the road a short ways another farm house and the buildings that accompanied it. We even discovered a deep well carefully stoned up on the side and still capable of supplying water. Other cellar holes in the neighborhood had grown up with brush and grass until they were almost hidden from sight.

I asked my guide the question that was bothering me: "Why did this settlement die? How could there be at one time so many families calling this home only to have it vanish into the wilderness?" In response he told me about the main stage line that once passed this way. "Down back a quarter of a mile is a huge marsh or swamp over which pontoon bridges used to carry the stage coach going west to Albany. As the years passed, each pontoon bridge would sink down into the water and a new one would be built on top of it. But finally the bridge was abandoned and what used to be a thoroughfare became a deadend road in the middle of the woods."

Why did this settlement die? Perhaps because there was no through way of communication and when the way of communication was cut off the community was abandoned. It was at a deadend, there were no fresh inflows of life. There was no vital artery carrying freshness of life and incentive to carry on the struggle. When lines of communication break down, life becomes difficult and ultimately impossible.

No man is an island. No man lives unto himself alone. We need one another. We need lines of communication but communication is not enough. Once we thought that communication was the key to the world's salvation. If only we had a universal language, one group kept proclaiming, then the world would have peace, if only we could break down the barrier of many different languages. Or, if only distances were not so great so that men could be drawn together and get to know people of other parts of the globe, there would be peace. Or again, if only we could communicate with one another these frictions which beset our world would be dissolved.

But our wildest dreams in the field of communication have been surpassed and realized. Make a visit to the United Nations building in New York City. A flick of the switch and you can hear what is going on at a meeting of the general as-

sembly or at any one of the committee meetings in any one of five different languages. The language barrier has been broken and yet peace is still a dream and a hope.

All through the year the people of this congregation travel around the world. It is becoming increasingly common that in the Church office we receive word that some of you cannot make such and such a committee meeting because you are in England for the weekend or you are in India this week, or you won't be back from Korea until Tuesday. Distances have been shrunk until all the world is a neighborhood but the neighborhood is not always at peace.

Dr. Halford Luccock of Yale Divinity School reports that in the first issue of The New York Times in 1851 the Times achieved an amazing scoop. It printed news rushed to Boston on the Royal Mail Steamer Europe and then by train to New York City and it was able to publish news that was not much more than two weeks old. "Today," Dr. Luccock continues, "any morning we can read in the paper not only what happened in Korea yesterday, but, by the grace of the international dateline, what happened tomorrow."[1]

If communications could save our world, our salvation would already be assured. But we are, in our day, learning a very important lesson. We are learning it is not enough to be brought into a world of conversation. We are learning that it is not enough that people be drawn closer together physically. Indeed, we are learning that we have many more acute problems just because the world of men has been thrown together into close contact almost overnight. Now we know that we need more than communication, more than the exchange of ideas, of news, and intelligence. We need holy communion—that venture of the soul, and heart, and spirit in spiritual closeness to a loving heavenly Father and to one another in his spirit of love. A human family may live in close physical proximity, speak the same language, exchange ideas freely, but without that communion of spirit in love the family has nothing.

George MacDonald, a British preacher, expressed our plight in a prayer: " 'Tis but as men draw nigh to thee, my Lord, they can draw near each other and not hurt."

THIS IS THE hour of communion. We gather at the table of our Lord, not to express an opinion, not to rationalize a theory, but to seek a presence and to pray for a spirit. As in the upper room that night so long ago, He is our host. We come at his invitation. We pray for a portion of his spirit and a renewal of life, and hope, and comfort.

"It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."

1. "Communicating the Gospel" by Halford Luccock

Department Editor: RICHARD P. CARTER, 211 High Street, Suffield, Connecticut

AFTER TEN YEARS

by WILLIAM A. LEATH

An informal review of the work of the Commission on the Ministry—Part Two

THE LAST ISSUE OF THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY carried the first of two informal reports on the first decade of service by the Commission on the Ministry. This report recalled the considerations which led to the formation of the Commission, and at the same time indicated something of the scope of the work during this first decade of service. The report which follows seeks to give a quick survey of the actual accomplishments of those years. It concludes with a brief statement of the Commission's plans for the years immediately ahead while the union between the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church is being consummated.

Much new ground had to be explored and broken during the first years of the Commission's existence. A Department of the Ministry was a new venture, and the road ahead had to be carefully marked. Great care needed to be exercised that the policies adopted in no way interfered with the time-honored rights of local churches, associations and state conferences. To guide the Commission in its work, and to provide a clear pattern for its procedures, and at the same time give to all concerned on the various levels a dependable and up-to-date set of standards regarding the ministry, a revised manual was necessary. The old manual, popularly known as "the Maurer Manual," had become considerably dated. A careful study made it apparent that it would be wiser to replace this manual with a new one which took into consideration the many changes which had taken place with regard to the ministry since this manual had been written. Accordingly the preparation of a new manual became the Commission's first major undertaking.

Several years were spent at this work. A special committee, comprised of men who had long experience in this field, worked with Dr. Buschmeyer in the preparation of the manual. Thorough reports were made at each meeting of the Commission, and there was intensive counseling with state and association committees on the ministry, state conference superintendents, seminary deans and professors, and, in fact, with many ministers. Every effort was made to secure critical comment and advice throughout our fellowship. Seminars dealing with the manual were held during two of the General Council meetings. The present manual was at length adopted. It has now been in use for eight years, and has become the acceptable guide in matters pertaining to the ministry. It is planned to have fairly frequent revisions so that at all times it may clearly reflect existing policies and procedures.

Preparation of the manual revealed a need which the Commission believed required attention not only at the national level, but particularly among associations and the state conferences. This was the absence of uniform standards and policies regarding the total ministry. Few, if any conferences, had committees on the

ministry. This was regarded primarily to be the responsibility of the associations in which ministers held their standing. But even here there was little uniform practice. Often in one association there were to be found several committees which dealt with various aspects of the ministry. While there was no desire on the part of the Commission to invade the rights of associations and conferences, and certainly no intention to seek absolute uniformity, it was agreed that the situation which prevailed was chaotic, and should be changed. It was felt that each state conference ought to have a committee on the ministry, and that one association committee dealing with the ministry in all its aspects would be more desirable than several committees. Accordingly, the Commission "spoke its mind" as it could about these matters. The result has been a marked change throughout the country, so that today each state conference has its committee on the ministry, and the great majority of associations have changed their procedures for the better. An important consequence of such changes has been an increased awareness of the need for more thoroughgoing standards for in-care, licensure, ordination, and installation throughout our fellowship, and a keener appreciation of the problems of the individual minister, along with the desire to help him in his ministry.

IT SHOULD ALSO be stated that the contributions of the state and association committees on the ministry to the national Commission have been notable. The give-and-take of insights and experiences has led to increased effectiveness in every phase of the Commission's study and action during the past ten years.

Early in this first decade of service, it became apparent that there was a need for the publication of materials which would emphasize and highlight various concerns of the Commission. Attractive pamphlets were desired to aid in the program of recruitment of candidates for the ministry and for allied fields of Christian service. Existing materials needed to be carefully studied and improved. Some had obviously outlived their usefulness and were ready for retirement. Newer material was badly needed, and fields not previously covered required attention. The result has been the preparation and presentation of a considerable number of new pamphlets which have been widely used. A request from denominational directors of Christian education led to the publication of a booklet dealing with the status of Christian education workers, along with definite proposals about standing. A similar request for a booklet from the Commission dealing with Christian education in the small church brought about a study which led to the publication of a pamphlet on this subject. A study was made of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY which has resulted in a revision of the Quarterly and its present format and subject matter. A sub-committee of the Commission is constantly at work in the field of communication and publication.

The Commission on the Ministry from the outset felt that it had a definite responsibility to be of service to the minister in the field, a large part of this responsibility being concerned with whatever would strengthen and deepen his ministry, and particularly his own spiritual and cultural life. An important committee, to deal with the better books which should be brought to the attention of ministers was formed. Known as "Associates in Reading," this committee has rendered a fine service to ministers and laymen alike, and its program of suggested reading has been eagerly followed year after year.

The Commission has encouraged state conference and association committees on the Ministry to provide regular retreats and conferences of ministers where their personal and religious life may continue to grow from the contact provided with

outstanding religious and cultural leaders, and from contact with their fellow ministers. During the past ten years there has been a marked development in this field in every conference and many associations. Attendance at our two summer schools at Deering and Le Foret, and at similar schools, has been encouraged.

A concern for the material welfare of the ministry has marked the Commission's program from the beginning. Studies of ministers' salaries, annuities, and related matters have been made and will continue to be made. Through Dr. Buschmeyer's interest and attention, our Commission took part in the effort to make ministers eligible for social security. This past fall a recommendation was passed by the Commission urging that $4000 per annum be set by our churches as the minimum salary for Congregational Christian ministers. Although this appears to be, and is, a low minimum by today's standards, it nevertheless marks a considerable advance for our smaller churches. The Commission has urged that a concern about such matters be upon the hearts of all association and state Committees on the Ministry.

The recruiting and training of men and women for the ministry and allied fields is a meaningful and continuing part of the national program with regard to the ministry. This is a concern which the Commission believes begins with the minister and his people in the local church and goes up the line in associations, state conferences, and the national bodies. The Commission has accepted gladly the major responsibility for projecting the biennial emphasis upon recruitment. During the past ten years recruiting our best young people for the ministry has been continually studied and reported. Association, state conferences, and local churches have been encouraged to hold annual conferences on Christian vocations, and to work without ceasing in this field. The result of such a crusade throughout our fellowship is now beginning to show results.

A fine working relationship has been established with leading theological seminaries by the Commission which has led to mutual understanding and aid. A Theological Committee, working with a committee from our Commission, has been set up and is at work. This promises much for the near future as well as for the long range. Close relationship has been established throughout the country between associations and seminaries within their boundaries which has led to better understanding on the part of Congregational students of the guiding principles of Congregational polity and procedures. Dr. Bushmeyer and members of the Commission also regularly visit the seminaries to meet and counsel with Congregational students there. In recent years seminarians have been encouraged to visit our national headquarters where conferences are arranged with our ministers and secretaries.

The work with chaplains has been mentioned in the previous report. It should be emphasized that this is regarded as a most important part of the Commission's concern. Until two years ago this work was handled by Dr. Buschmeyer, along with other heavy responsibilities. We now have in the Reverend Russell Loesch a fulltime staff minister who devotes his complete attention to this field. The results speak for themselves.

(*Continued on page 40*)

THE POSITION IN PRESENT TENSION AREAS

by ALFORD CARLETON

THERE WAS A TIME when "tension areas" of the foreign missionary enterprise were thought of in geographic terms. There were certain countries to which missionaries were not admitted. There were others in which they had definite restrictions or problems with the authorities. There were other areas where things seemed to be going very well, but where one with any sense of prophecy might have said that a state of extreme tension existed and the great opportunity of the day was being missed. In any case a geographic definition of tension areas is very definitely dated. For example, China was for many years completely closed to the missionary. Then for a period of just over half a century it was one of the most promising missionary fields of the world. Now again it is a closed area, at least for most missionaries from the sending countries of the Christian Church. Who knows when it may again be on the other list and welcome workers from other lands, perhaps not Anglo-Saxon but from Christian countries of Asia?

There have been very interesting developments in recent months in the area of the development of a program of interchange of Christian workers from one country to another, but within compatible areas in terms of color and culture. Thus the Christian Church has the power to remain above the limits of nationalism, but without making the word "foreign" to mean specifically the white race. Some of the interchanges already in operation as between the Philippines and Thailand, Korea and Indonesia, Japan and Okinawa, or Australia and New Guinea, have been very fruitful in the development of a new concept of the "foreign missionary." There must now be, as there have always been, constant changes in the program and strategy of the work of the Christian Mission, but there is no justification for the statement so often made, "The day of the missionary is over." The most such statements may mean is usually that the missionary is being given a new name such as the current term "fraternal worker."

Yet there are certain definite areas of tension. They are not all new, but they have taken on particular urgency in the last decade or two. I shall name four of them. The first area of tension is in those lands where there is a Christian minority living under the rule of a Western power or under government so recently freed from Western rule that what is called "colonialism" is a vivid and recent memory. There the tension is obviously between the Christian gospel and the terminology and framework in which it has been preached. There is entirely too much sting in the charge that Christianity is "the white man's religion" in large parts of Africa and Asia today. There is a large and growing literature upon the subject, and the Christian Church is not unaware of this tension.

The second area of tension is where the colonial power has moved on, and the independent nation is in a grip of a revived ethnic religion, in the guise of nationalism. Though the cry of "colonialism" may yet be raised against the Christian Church in some of those areas, that

is on the whole an issue that is past. The real problem facing the Christian Church in these circumstances is the tension between the gospel as a special revelation of truth, and the desire for conformity, for putting its roots down into the soil of the land, for the use of indigenous symbolism and custom, and the ultimate danger of syncretism. On this subject, again, there is an important literature growing up, particularly in India.

THE THIRD AREA of tension is in those lands where there is a government that is nominally Christian but not foreign, or there is a national Christian Church. In those lands there is always the objection that those who would preach Christian truth are in some way disloyal to the established church. In some cases the charge is true, and there is an unnecessary sense of divisiveness in the witness of various missions and churches found within the same geographic territory. This tension has entered a new phase as churches once far distant have become members of the World Council of Churches, and there is the question of comity and fellowship as between members of the World Council. There has been held an important consultation on the topic of "Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty" and the outcome of that study has been circulated by approval of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Particularly in the lands of the Near East, where the Orthodox Church is long established and often numerically superior, the Protestant or Evangelical denominations established through a century of missionary activity, and often with deserved success in the gaining of numbers and position, are now faced with a dilemma which seems to catch them on dead center:—if they continue to "proselyte" among the members of the prevailing church in the area they are disloyal. If they do not do so they are moribund, "unspiritual" and can no longer compete with the sects around them which have no such conscientious scruples. There is need for more study of this area of tension.

It is perhaps ironical that the fourth area of tension is the reverse of the third. It is the situation created by the great activity and the large numbers of missionaries from various Pentecostal, Adventist and other denominations which look upon any form of organization as being an infringement of the freedom of the spirit. For them comity does not exist, and unfortunately it is easier to build a church out of those already in other Christian churches than it is to reach into the heart of the non-Christian world. This has become a greater problem since the closing out of Anglo-Saxon mission activity in China, as it has meant a doubling of the number of such representatives in lands like India, Formosa, and pretty generally across the world. Since we all bear the common name of "Protestant" or "Evangelical" the churches and missions which have worked faithfully in the ecumenical spirit find themselves criticized for acts of unbrotherly competition which come from others for whose work they really have no responsibility at all.

Christian organizations, whether churches or mission boards, are deeply concerned over these areas of tension. Much constructive thinking is being done, but the thinking is still far ahead of practice and practice abroad is far ahead of the understanding of the situation on the part of most churches in the United States.

Behind these particular tensions, there lies, or there should lie, the eternal tension between the ideal of a Christian Church which is above race or creed or nationality or color, and the actual situation in every land where the Church is at work. As we work for the reduction of that tension in any one country we are serving the cause of Christ around the world.

COMMENT—(*Continued from page 2*)

Thank you very much for your article and for the fine MINISTER'S QUARTERLY magazine. I think it's an excellent publication.

C. FOSBERG HUGHES
Sioux City, Iowa

On "Covenants"

In response to your request printed in the December issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY, I am enclosing a copy of our covenant . . .

We are not only proud of our covenant but consider it practical as well as precious. All incoming members are requested to assent to it and we make much of the covenanted relationship that is traditional Congregationalism. Our brotherhood is planning to have a card or little folder printed with the covenant and extracts from the "order for the reception of members into the Church" which will be given to new members. This will not only remind them of their covenant obligation but also of their promises upon entrance into our fellowship.

Congratulations on your venture. I think it is a good one. Incidentally, our church was founded during the controversy over the so-called half-way covenant which controversy led to a split in the First Church of Stratford.

JOHN P. CRANSTON, JR.
Woodbury, Connecticut

On "Baptism"

The conversation on baptism in your "Comment" columns continues to get off on the wrong foot. We can never center the arguments on sprinkling vs. immersion or on infant baptism vs. adult baptism. These are entirely secondary arguments and do not lead one directly to the meaning of baptism itself.

It can be demonstrated, however, that each position does throw some light on the meaning of the rite. Therefore for the record I would like to submit the following argument as the affirmative value of infant baptism.

God did not ask the world whether or not it was ready to receive the Christ. Christ was just manifest and people were forced to make a decision about who He was, a decision which determined their destiny. Infant baptism, done not against the will of the person, but still without his consent, is a way of individualizing this event. When the child grows to the age of accountability for himself, he will have to account for himself as a member of the human race and must face this question as to what he makes out of Jesus. To know he was baptized without his consent would convey to him that he with all men stands inescapably under the event of God in Christ. Now what does he make of it? One's decision determines one's destiny.

Such theologizing has direct psychic results. As a grown person ponders on the forces that have shaped his life he knows that within the community of faith human life is affirmed as inseparable from the love of God in spite of life and death, principalities and powers, etc., which continually lift life up and dash it down. The consequence is a life of gratitude.

Therefore we can say that child baptism symbolizes the initiative of God and his community.

ERNEST A. RUETER
Evansville 15, Indiana

A Worthy Suggestion

I want to express my appreciation for the high quality of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY. Your admirable editorial, "Let's Shake a Shibboleth," the charge by Mr. Groetsema, and the section on the minister and his reading, I have found especially helpful.

(*Continued next page*)

COMMENT—(*Continued from page 39*)

I have one suggestion, however, which seems to me very basic to our whole fellowship and to the ecumenical spirit. This is that your editorial staff be broadened to be thoroughly national in scope. I note that all of your departmental heads are living in New England. They are doing an admirable job, but I should strongly recommend that as vacancies occur you press into service men from the Midwest, the South, and the Pacific Coast. On page 34, for example, the Committee of Associates in Reading are almost exclusively New Englanders. Dr. Fred S. Buschmeyer just spent a most helpful day with our Committee on Ministerial Standing of our Conference and stressed the importance of the national ties which bind us. There is no more important way for this to occur than through so splendid a publication as is the QUARTERLY. The very fact that our denominational headquarters are in Boston and New York and that the editor of the QUARTERLY is in Massachusetts seems to suggest the advisability of giving national strength and national representation for all denomination publications.

HARLAND E. HOGUE
Berkeley, Calif.

AFTER TEN YEARS—(*Continued from page 36*)

So runs the story of the developments of the past ten years. Much has had to be omitted which ought to have been said, but time and space are limited. It is enough to say that an active, alert, and constantly working Commission is on the job. Its members are all full-time parsons and laymen who are honored to have the privilege of serving on this significant Commission. They feel that though ten years have passed, they have merely begun to scratch the surface. Much remains to be accomplished, and those on the Commission believe that the years ahead will witness developments which will do much to promote the better life of the church through a ministry which serves the church and the Lord of us all with a higher sense of dedication, loyalty and sacrifice than ever before.

The Union between the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church is near its beginning. What the role of our Commission will be in the United Church will be we can only surmise, but we know it will be a great role. Meetings have been held and are scheduled to be held again this spring between our Commission and the Evangelical and Reformed Commission. We are getting to know one another, and to understand how we work and how we may learn to work together. The Evangelical and Reformed Commission is comprised of able and dedicated men, and the record of the years since this Commission was organized easily merits favorable comparison with that of our own Commission. We feel that we shall have no difficulty in working together, for we are one in ideals and hopes. A suggested plan of action in the period after the uniting Synod will be presented at the Synod meeting in June here in Cleveland. We believe it will be approved, for it promises action along lines already well laid out by the previous practices of the two Commissions.